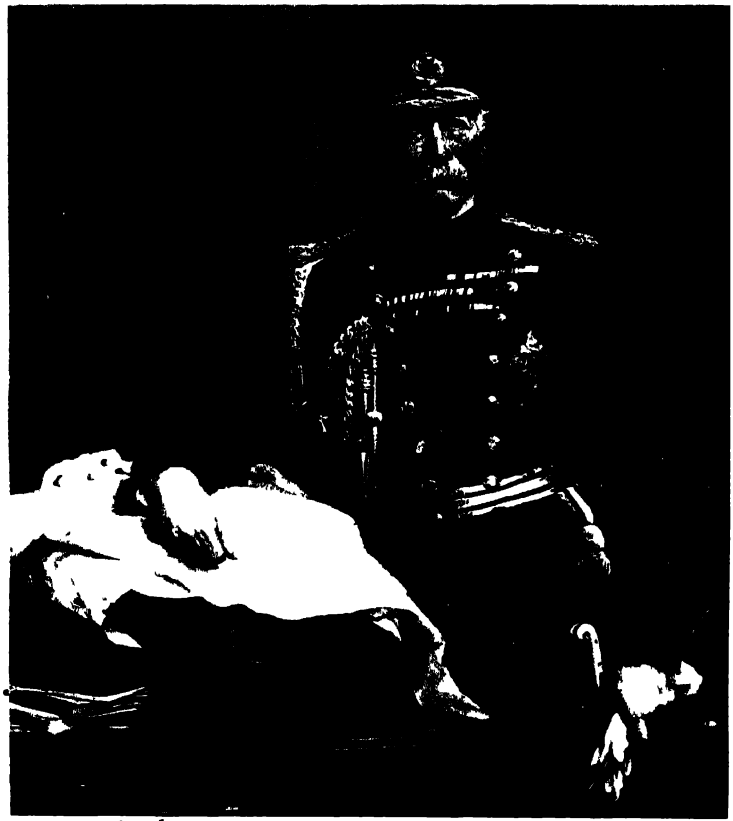
FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL



Leonard Wood
1906

FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

BY

EVELYN WOOD, F.M.
V.C., G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

IN TWO VOLUMES

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS

VOLUME II

SECOND EDITION

METHUEN & CO.
36 ESSEX STREET W.C.
LONDON

First Published . . October 1906
Second Edition . . October 1906

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Painted for the Fishmongers Company by W. OULESS, R.A., 1906

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FROM MIDSHIPMAN TO FIELD MARSHAL

CHAPTER XXVI

1878—FROM KING WILLIAM'S TOWN TO UTRECHT

The unreadiness for war of a Regimental system—A Baca hairdresser, Pondoland—Its white Queen, Mrs. Jenkins—General Thesiger—Purchase of Regimental Transport—Faku—Cetewayo's Military kraal, Luneberg, its Military occupation—Manyoba.

ON the 26th June, my new Command, the Natal Column, consisting of 4 guns, 5 companies 90th Light Infantry (in which I was still a supernumerary Major), and a company Mounted Infantry, left Kei Road, Major Buller with 200 Frontier Light staying behind for a week to enlist men, was to overtake us. Up to Kokstadt we marched over treeless rolling plains, and in spite of the fact that we crossed 122 (unbridged) rivers, it frequently happened there was not sufficient water for the Column. I rode, therefore, every march three times. Leaving my excellent Staff officer, Captain F. Grenfell,[1] K.R.R. Corps, to encamp the Column, I went on to the next camping ground, as local information was unreliable. It was generally offered by Storekeepers, whose estimate of the quantity required was often based on the assumption that all Europeans would consume bottled beer. This, indeed, many of our men did, at 2s. a bottle. Our canteen President bought at Mount Frere £40 worth of stores from Mr. McGregor,[2] who had become a prosperous colonist. He interested me by extolling Colonel Eyre, though he was present

[1] Now General Lord Grenfell, G.C.B. [2] Ex-private soldier, 73rd Regiment.